

Urban Thoroughfare Classification System

In the urban thoroughfare plan, elements are classified as major thoroughfares, minor thoroughfares, or local access streets. The major thoroughfares are the primary traffic arteries of the urban area providing for traffic movements within, around, and through the area. Minor thoroughfares are designed to collect traffic from the local access streets and carry it to the major thoroughfare system. Local access streets, which may be further classified as residential, commercial, or industrial streets, are designed only to provide access to abutting property. Due to the limited amount of detail that can be shown on a county thoroughfare plan, only urban major thoroughfares are shown.

The radial-loop system is a coordinated system of major thoroughfares that is most adaptable to the desired lines of travel within an urban area. It also is reflected in most urban area thoroughfare plans. The radial-loop system includes radials, crosstowns, loops, and bypasses. Radial thoroughfares provide for travel from points outside to major destinations inside the urban area. Crosstown thoroughfares provide for traffic movements across the central area and around the central business district (CBD). Loop thoroughfares provide for lateral travel movements between suburban areas. Bypasses are designed to carry non-local traffic around and through the area. Occasionally, a bypass with low through traffic volumes can be designed to function as a portion of the urban loop. The radial-loop system and urban thoroughfare classification street system are illustrated in Figure 1.

Rural Thoroughfare Classification System

The rural system consists of those facilities outside the urban thoroughfare planning boundaries. They are classified into four major systems: Principal arterials, minor arterials, major and minor collectors, and local roads. Table 1 indicates generally accepted statewide mileage on these systems.

Rural Principal Arterial System: This system consists of a connected network of continuous routes that serve corridor movements having substantial statewide or interstate travel characteristics. This will be indicated by both the trip lengths and the travel densities. The principal arterial system should serve all urban areas of over 50,000 population and a majority of those with a population greater than 5,000. The Interstate system constitutes a significant portion of the principal arterial system.

Rural Minor Arterial System: This system, in conjunction with the principal arterial system, forms a network that links cities, larger towns, and other major traffic generators such as large resorts. The minor arterial system generally serves intrastate and intercounty travel and travel corridors with trip lengths and travel densities somewhat less than the principal arterial system.